

Arlington  
Natchez, Miss.

17-8  
H.A.B.S. No. ~~Miss~~

HABS  
MISS.  
NATCH

4

PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA  
DISTRICT OF MISSISSIPPI

Historic American Buildings Survey  
A. Hays Town, District Officer  
Jackson, Miss.

HABS  
MISS.  
1 - NATCH  
4.

ARLINGTON  
Natchez, Adams County, Mississippi

Owner (Or Custodian)

Mr. and Mrs. Hubert Barnum

Date of Erection

1816

Architect

James Hampton White

Builder

Present Condition

Good

Number of Stories

Two

Materials of Construction

Foundation

Brick

Floors

Wood

Exterior Walls

Brick

Interior Walls

Roof

Asbestos shingle pitched

Other Existing Records

Additional Data

## A R L I N G T O N

Natchez Adams County Mississippi

This old home is considerably more than a century old, but the exact year of its erection is unknown. It was designed and built by John Hampton White, a noted architect of his day, who was born in Elizabethtown, New Jersey, in 1772, and died in Natchez in 1819. He not only built "Arlington," but also designed the noted Commercial Bank, the first in the State, which was opened in 1809.

According to authentic papers kept by the Natchez Chapter of D. A. R., Mr. White belonged to the same family which later produced another famous architect, Stanford Leland White. In 1808 John Hampton White married Jane Surget, a daughter of Pierre Surget, a colorful character of colonial days. The Surgets were wealthy and John Hampton White, who came here during the Spanish regime, had large land-holdings of his own. It was but natural that he should plan a home in keeping with his great wealth and social position. It took years to assemble material for such a building, and Mr. White died before "Arlington" was complete. He left the larger part of a considerable fortune to his childless and already well-to-do widow, but also left handsome cash bequests to a number of relatives in New York and New Jersey.

After five or six years, tradition says Mrs. White completed the home and decided to give a house warming. The furniture, made by special order in France, had been placed and lustrous brocades draped the huge windows, while the grounds had been landscaped by an English gardner. The elite of Natchez came en masse to this party. The long hallway was converted into a ball room, and the party lasted until a very late hour.

.Next morning, July 1, 1825, the mistress was found murdered, and her diamonds were missing. It was presumably the act of a slave, but the mystery has never been cleared. After this great tragedy Mrs. White's estate was divided by a group of commissioners named by the judge. Shares were numbered and drawn. In this way beautiful "Arlington", with all its treasures, passed to Mrs. Charlotte Surget Bingaman, wife of Adam L. Bingaman and a sister of Mrs. White. Mr. Bingaman was a gentleman of the old school, brilliant, and a gifted orator. No affair in early Natchez was complete without his presence, and time after time he was elected to the State Senate, during the latter twenties.

.Arlington next passed by deed to Judge S. S. Boyd, who married a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Bingaman. Judge Boyd paid thirty thousand to the other heirs, and it was he who collected the handsome paintings and many other objects of art at Arlington. He was one of the leading lawyers of the state and a man of much erudition. In the division of the Boyd estate Arlington went to a daughter, Mrs. Bienville Rhodes, by whom it was sold to a Mr. Gillette from the north.

## A R L I N G T O N

Natchez Adams County Mississippi

"Arlington," and "Rosalie" were built about the same time, and while there is some similarity of design, "Arlington" retained much less of the Spanish Influence and is not nearly as successful in feeling. However, the front of "Arlington" is imposing enough with its four slender two-story columns supporting the second floor porch and the pediment. Near the center of the wood pediment is a half elliptical window, covered with louvre blinds. There is a delicately moulded architrave around the window to its sill, broken only by its center arch key.

The cornice is very delicate and refined, but is very much more laboured and studied than Rosalie's. The mouldings are all small. Under the top mould is a band of oval wood beads. The flat mutules under the projection are bored with auger holes. The frieze is a concave wood surface and in place of the architrave there is a band of wood guttae free[standing from the brick surface of the wall.

The two center columns are spread perceptibly in the middle bay, probably so designed to give a full view of the large doorways. The entrance doorway is a large paneled door with side lights and a true circular fanlight with delicate wood division muntin designs.

The upper porch doorway is identical except the fan-light is elliptical. These doorways are very delicate in detail and were beautifully executed by skillful craftsmen. There are marble keys at the spring lines and at the center of the arches. The windows with their marble lintels and wood louver blinds are symmetrically placed.

.The rear elevation is very interesting. However, from its roof line one may assume that the present rear porches were not designed with the original house. The first and second floor center doorways which are identical with those on the front, indicate the interior existence of some kind of original porch. The return of the main cornice of the house brick wall line might mean a replica of the front porches; still no matter what the original design intended, it probably would not have produced a better effect. The main roof covers the brick body of the house, and additional rafters start from the main ridge line, pitching out to the six columns of the porches. The simple narrow cornice above these columns is lower than the main house cornice, and cause an unusual method of handling a roof. This scheme was no doubt borrowed from "Gloucester." The roof is now covered with hexagonal asbestos shingles, and originally it was slate. There are two well designed dormers on this elevation.

.To the right of the rear elevation is a two-story brick servants' house connected to the house by lattice walled runways.

.All of the brick used in the house and servants' quarters were red clay brick, carefully moulded and mechanically layed in Flemish bond, the glaring white mortar joints look almost as if they had been lined with paint. A stuccoed flat roofed addition, "carpenter style," added to the left elevation, does not add to the house's architectural exactness. On the grounds about a hundred yards from the home is the original stable, well designed and in harmony with the architecture of the house.

.The interior is planned very much like "Rosalie". It has its large central through halls with its side stair hall, - in this case to the left of the main hall. The parlor which is at the front to the right is longer and more pretentious than the one at "Rosalie."

.The second story bedrooms are symmetrically placed about the hall. All of the interior architecture is refined and beautiful.

.The house is about unchanged from its beginning. All of the furniture, which was made especially for "Arlington," paintings, silverware, china, library, and even the original heavy brocaded drapes and the upholstery of the furniture is still in place. The gold drawing room, or music room as it is often called, is a luxurious display of furnishing and decoration. In this room is a painting of members of the family, attributed to Sully.

."Arlington" is well worth the attention of decorators and students of art and furnishings, as well as students of architecture.

Compiled from data of Stuart Cuthbertson and Mrs. Edith Wyatt Moore

*Revised 1936 H.C.F.*